

REMARKS

The applicants appreciate the time and consideration that the Examiner has extended in reviewing this application. The applicants also appreciate the telephonic interview conducted on April 30, 2005, to discuss the final office action mailed November 17, 2004.

With respect to the statutory double patenting rejections of claims 53-64, the Examiner has requested that the applicants clarify the difference between these claims and claims 20-31 of prior U.S. Patent No. 6,803,110. Applicants hereby state that claims 53-64 recite a substrate “directly bonded” to the decorative laminate top layer assembly, whereas claims 20-31 of the ‘110 patent recite a substrate “attached” to a decorative laminate top layer assembly. The applicants respectfully submit that the term “directly bonded” is defined in the specification as meaning without the use of an additional adhesive layer (See paragraph [0051]), whereas the term “attached” is broader and connotes any multitude of attachment schemes. Accordingly, because claims 53-64 of the pending application are different from claims 20-31 of the ‘110 patent for at least the above reasons, the applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 101.

With respect to the obviousness-type double patenting rejections found in the final office action, the applicants are submitting herewith a terminal disclaimer to overcome these rejections. Accordingly, the applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the obviousness-type double patenting rejections of claims 53-74, 84-88, 90-97, 102, 103 and 105.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, and in view of the remarks set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that the application and the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request favorable consideration and the timely allowance of all pending claims. If, for any reason, the application and claims are not in condition for allowance, or any additional information is required, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (312) 701-8738. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees (or credit any overpayment) associated with this communication to our Deposit Account No. 13-0019. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 not accounted for above, such extension is requested and should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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